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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 25 | Min 21 | Humidity 55% Partly Cloudy Sensex 80,234 | Nifty 24,274 | Gold 75,898 | Silver 88,160 | Dollar 84.42 | Euro 89.00 | GBP 106.75

STOP THE AXE
Forest minister asks for action against BBMP officers after getting complaint about axing of 40-year-old rain tree
PAGE 3

TRASH TOLL
Hoteliers up in arms against Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd's plan to levy user fee of Rs 12 per kg of waste
PAGE 4

No water in the toilets, no electricity, run-down building—this is state of anganwadi where children of slum dwellers in Lakkasandra are forced to sit while their parents go to work

CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD?

Number of kids going to anganwadi has been dwindling

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"It is the responsibility of the child and women development officials to monitor the functioning of the anganwadi centre. Maintaining an anganwadi centre in such unhygienic conditions is against the Article 25 of the UNCRC
— Nagasimha G Rao, Child Rights Trust

The condition of an anganwadi centre at Lakkasandra makes it quite clear that the authorities concerned are either not aware of Article 25 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or don't care about it. This could be because most of the people who take their children to the anganwadi are the slum-dwellers, who depend on it to take care of their children while they go for work. However, the authorities concerned have failed to ensure that even the most basic amenities are there at the centre.

It is said the anganwadi centre did not have electricity for more than seven years.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

Time to press the panic button

Of 6.04 lakh vehicles registered with Transport Dept, just 25,000 installed tracking device, panic buttons

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The State Government's mandate for fitting Vehicle Location Tracking Devices (VLTD) and emergency panic buttons in public service and national permit goods vehicles has met resistance from vehicle owners. Despite clear directives, compliance has been low. The state government had set a September 10 deadline for the installation of VLTD and panic buttons in 6.04 lakh public service vehicles registered with the Transport Department. However, even after the deadline, only 25,000 vehicles, that is a mere 4.11%, have complied.

An official said, "The installation was made mandatory under the Nirbhaya Scheme, aimed at ensuring the safety of women, children, and other passengers. The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways mandated the integration of these devices, and Karnataka identified 12 authorised agencies for their installation. Vehicle owners were instructed to install these devices exclusively through these agencies."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Analogue slit-scan photography exhibit

Explore Felix Baßler's final exhibition as part of BangaloREsidency 2024. His artworks raise questions about the depth of his relationships with the people he encountered during his residency. Using the analogue slitscan process—a technique that stretches and abstracts time within a single frame—he blurred the lines between abstraction and representation. He strikes a balance between preserving the anonymity of the photographed individuals and capturing their intricate details in a playful manner, aiming to avoid objectification. **Where: Kāṇike Studio, Cooke Town; When: November 28, 6 pm**

02 Poetic evening

Join in for an evening filled with poetry, music and conversations celebrating the launch of Jeet Thayil's new poetry book, 'I'll Have It Here,' with Rahul Soni. This discussion and reading will then be followed by an interactive Q&A with the audience, and a musical performance by Yashas and Hollis. **Where: Champaca Bookstore When: November 30, 5 pm**

03 Dance awards ceremony

The 10th edition of the 'attenDance Awards,' India's one-of-a-kind and most authentic platform for honouring exceptional dance talent, is here. Founded by art historian and author Ashish Khokar, these awards stand apart in a crowded field of recognition, making their mark as India's only alternate dance awards. Five prestigious categories are awarded annually. **Where: Alliance Francaise Hall, Vasanth Nagar; When: November 30, 6 pm**

Case hearing halted over confusion in POCSO Act

Have to consider if POCSO Act is gender neutral or not: HC stays proceedings against woman accused of sexually assaulting minor

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The Karnataka High Court on Wednesday suspended proceedings in a POCSO case against a 52-year-old woman, noting the need to establish whether the law is gender-neutral, given that the accused is female. The court expressed astonishment, stating it was encountering such a case for the first time.

Justice M Nagaprasanna granted a temporary stay on proceedings against the petitioner and scheduled the next hearing for December 6, whilst directing prosecutors to submit their response. Senior Advocate Hashmath Pasha, representing petitioner Archana Patil, highlighted that the complaint under Sections 4 and 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act was filed after a four-year delay. The alleged incident occurred in 2020, with the FIR registered this year.

The bench remarked during proceedings, "POCSO case against a lady, this is the first time I have come across such a case. This is shocking." The court added, "This is a very important case; we will have to lay down whether the POCSO Act is gender neutral or not."

Pasha argued that the aggravated sexual assault charges against the petitioner involved a 13-year-old schoolboy, formerly their neighbour. He suggested the case stemmed from financial dealings, with the complainants attempting to avoid repayment.

Subsequently, the court issued the interim order. The interim order stated, "The case projects a strange circumstance. The petitioner is alleged to have violated the ingredients of Sections 4 and 6 of the Act against a 13-year-old boy. The petitioner is a lady of 52 years. The incident is said to have happened on May 1, 2020. The complainant is registered on June 26, 2024, after four years. The senior counsel would submit that there are a plethora of financial transactions between the parties. Using the child of 13-years of an alleged incident of the 2020 of the petitioner indulging in penetrative sexual assault against a boy, the crime is sought to be registered and police have filed chargesheet."

No bail on completing half or 1/3rd sentence if accused is booked in multiple cases: HC

The HC has denied bail to a man facing charges under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act for allegedly defrauding the bank of Rs 1,553 crore through fabricated documents and false loan disbursements. The accused in the case, K Ramakrishna, aged 73, previously served as Chairman of Guru Raghavendra Sahakara Bank Niyamitha and Sri Guru Sarvabhauma Souhanda Credit Co-operative Ltd.

Initially, Ramakrishna sought bail from the Trial Court under Section 479(1) of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, citing trial delays and his custody period of two years and seven months. After this attempt failed, he filed his third bail application with the HC. The HC ruled that the petitioner's claim under Section 479 BNSS regarding completion of one-third of the punishment period was invalid, given the multiple cases registered against him.

Justice HP Sandesh noted that Section 479 of BNSS's benefits is subject to Section 479(2), and courts must consider the third proviso regarding multiple pending cases. The second proviso to Section 479(1) authorises courts to extend detention beyond the one-half period.

The gravity of the offence, involving fraud exceeding Rs 1,544 crore by the accused, was considered significant. The court referenced Section 531 of BNSS's saving clause regarding the old Act's applicability. The court concluded that given the different offences and multiple cases, the petitioner cannot invoke Section 479 of BNSS based on serving one-third of the punishment. The petition was consequently dismissed.

Citing the POCSO case as very important, the High Court bench has scheduled the next hearing for December 6

> **"POCSO case against a lady... This is shocking. We will have to lay down whether POCSO Act is gender neutral or not** – High Court bench

Locals demand new post office in Kithaganur

The residents of Kithaganur have pointed out the need for improved postal services as the locality lacks its own post office. Currently, residents rely on the post offices in KR Puram and Virgonagar, which are situated over three to four kilometres away. This distance poses significant challenges for the growing population, particularly for senior citizens and those dependent on regular postal transactions.

In response, residents of Kithaganur have submitted a formal request to the local panchayat and postal authorities, urging the establishment of a dedicated post office in their area. They highlighted the locality's burgeoning population, which includes an increasing number of residential apartments, houses, schools, and commercial establishments, all of which depend on efficient postal services.

"Accessing postal services has become inconvenient due to the distance. Kithaganur's population is growing rapidly, and a local post office is essential for meeting the needs of residents and businesses," said a resident of Kithaganur.

The lack of a nearby post office has been a longstanding concern for Kithaganur, particularly as the area continues to attract new housing developments and businesses. Residents argue that a local post office would not only enhance convenience but also support the efficient functioning of services such as courier deliveries, savings schemes, and government-related documentation processes.

Area arrangements for post office

To strengthen their plea, residents have proposed offering suitable premises within the locality to accommodate the new post office. "We are ready to provide space for a post office in our office building or nearby premises to facilitate this initiative. This demonstrates our commitment to making this happen for the benefit of the community," the letter read. **— BMB**

40 years of shade... cut down to dust

Khandre directs forest department to take action against BBMP officials for approving felling of healthy 40-year-old rain tree in Rajarajeshwari Nagar

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Acting on a complaint regarding the axing of a 40-year-old rain tree in Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre has instructed the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) to take appropriate action against Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officials for dereliction of duty.

A couple of months ago, nearly 20 residents of Rajarajeshwari Nagar filed a complaint against the Deputy Conservator of Forest (DCF) of BBMP for giving permission to remove a 40-year-old rain tree in the area. The residents highlighted that the tree was axed despite being in good health and posing no danger to life or property. The group also approached the Karnataka Forest Minister to apprise him about the issue.

The complainants also urged instructions to be given to the police department to file first information reports (FIRs) in such cases. "Cutting a tree that is no threat to life and property is a crime, and it is important to register FIRs in such cases if we desire to maintain the leftover green cover of the city. Police should start registering cases against this illegal activity. Currently, the majority of such offenders are getting away as the police deny filing a case or transferring the responsibility to the forest department," said one of the complainants from RR Nagar.

(Inset) The 40-year-old rain tree in Rajarajeshwari Nagar was axed down in August

> **Cutting a tree that is no threat to life & property is crime. It is important to register FIRs in such cases if we desire to maintain leftover green cover of city**
>
> –Complainant from RR Nagar

Need for stricter rules against tree-felling

City-based tree activists say the need of the hour is to tighten rules around the felling of trees in the city by amending the Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, 1976. As per the Act, the DCF of BBMP can file an FIR in the event of an illegal tree felling.

"The police department should be told to accept complaints on tree felling by the citizens and file FIRs directly. The DCF can't register formal complaints of every illegal tree felling. This amendment should be made so such incidents can be put under check," said Dattatraya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust.

While the forest minister has instructed the forest department to take action against the BBMP officials, some experts stated that action should also be taken against other departments concerned. "BBMP's forest department is a small team and is generally under a lot of pressure from various quarters. In some cases, they are unable to hold firm ground against that pressure. It is difficult for forest department officials to firmly oppose some quarters and resist the pressure. If any punishment is being considered, those who impose the pressure or officials from other departments, such as road transport and projects, should also be booked for dereliction of duty," added Devare.

Fan-murder case: Social-activist seeks rigorous inquiry

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Serious allegations of procedural lapses are being made against the officers investigating the ongoing fan-murder case involving actor Darshan Thoogudeepa. Mysuru-based social activist Snehamayi Krishna has lodged a formal complaint with the Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) R Hitendra and the City Police Commissioner (CP) B Dayananda, raising concerns over alleged shortcomings in the investigation of the Renukaswamy murder case.

In his complaint, Krishna claimed that the chargesheet filed in the case was based on false allegations and lacked a proper and thorough probe. Further, Krishna accused Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Chandan Kumar of attempting to protect his team, who were allegedly involved in fabricating and destroying key evidence related to the case. These allegations have cast a shadow over the integrity of the investigation, prompting calls for an impartial and detailed inquiry.

The initial complaint was filed on September 18, leading to a preliminary probe by the ACP of Byatarayanapura. However, Krishna expressed dissatisfaction with the findings, stating that the investigation lacked depth and clarity. Seeking a more rigorous inquiry, Krishna approached the CP and ADGP again on Tuesday, following which the CP directed Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) West Division Girish to take over the case and conduct a detailed investigation.

File photo of Darshan during the court proceedings

"I requested that the investigation be handled at the DCP level, as the ACP did not conduct the probe thoroughly. The commissioner has now directed DCP (West) Girish to take over the investigation," Krishna told BM.

When BM contacted the Commissioner of Police on this matter, he refused to comment. DCP (West) Girish had overseen the entire investigation into the Darshan case and has now been assigned to probe the allegations.

Earlier, Darshan and his associates were arrested in connection with the fan-murder case, which led to significant public outcry. While Darshan is currently out on bail, the case remains mired in controversy, with allegations of evidence tampering and investigative lapses now coming to the fore. These developments add another layer of complexity to an already high-profile case, increasing public and legal scrutiny on the investigation.

Custodial death case: 4 police constables sentenced to 7 years in prison

The 51st Additional District and Sessions Court on Monday convicted a head constable and three constables in a custodial death case and sentenced them to seven years of imprisonment and a fine of Rs 30,000 each.

The convicted officers, Head Constable Ajaz Khan and Constables Keshav Murthy, Mohan Ram, and Siddappa, were charged under IPC Sections 304 Part II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 330 (voluntarily causing hurt to extort confession), along with Section 34 (common intention).

The case dates back to 2016, when 42-year-old Mahendra Singh Rathod, a domestic worker from Odisha, was detained in connection with a house theft reported by a businessman in JB Nagar. Mahendra, accused of stealing Rs 3.5 lakh from his employer in HAL 2nd Stage, was allegedly assaulted during interrogation, leading to his death in custody.

CCTV footage showed Mahendra walking into the police station, but by evening, he collapsed and was declared dead at a hospital. While police claimed he had pre-existing health issues, a post-mortem report and a CID investigation confirmed assault as the cause of death. **–BMB**

200+ cases filed for flouting traffic rules

In a special operation conducted on Tuesday, the Whitefield Traffic Police, under the East Traffic Division, took stringent action against water tanker drivers flouting traffic rules.

A total of 248 vehicles were inspected, resulting in over 200 cases being registered—driving in the opposite direction on one-way roads (148 cases) and using shrill horns (54 cases)—during the drive. The crackdown led to the collection of fines amounting to 1 lakh. In addition to enforcement, the traffic police also educated the violators about the importance of adhering to traffic rules to ensure public safety. **–BMB**

Crash on B'luru-Mysuru highway kills 3

Three people were killed in a car accident when the car crashed into a KSRTC bus on the Mysuru-Bengaluru expressway near Sangabasavanadoddi in Ramanagara on Tuesday.

The deceased have been identified as Liyakhath (50) and his wife Asma (38) and Liyakhath's friend Noor (40). According to the police, they were on their way to Mysuru to visit their relatives. The incident occurred at night when their car lost control, jumped the median, and crashed into a KSRTC bus that was coming from the opposite direction. The trio died on the spot. The police have registered a case, and further investigation is underway.

–BMB

SWM's ₹12 waste fee: Hoteliers say no way

User fee to be imposed on large waste producers lacking on-site composting systems; industry groups express concerns, citing space limitations and calling for more support from BBMP

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In a significant move to streamline solid waste management in Bengaluru, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) has decided to levy a user fee of ₹12 per kilogram of waste on apartments, hotels, community halls, and buildings constructed on plots of 5,000 sq ft or more without an in-house waste processing system. BSWML has issued notices to over 2,000 large waste generators, including hotels, apartments, and community halls that produce more than 100 kg of waste daily. The notice mandates these establishments to clear outstanding dues from April 2024 and comply with the waste management regulations within seven days.

BBMP calls it temporary measure until large waste producers set up their own systems

Eliminating middlemen

According to BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) Special Commissioner Harish Kumar, the new system aims to address inefficiencies caused by middlemen who collect waste from these establishments and transfer it to BBMP's vehicles and waste management units. This has worsened the city's waste problem, adversely affecting the environment and public health. The move mandates large-scale waste producers to establish their composting facilities or partner directly with waste service providers.

Pushback from apartments and hotels

The new fee structure has sparked a backlash from associations representing hotels and apartments. PC Rao, Honorary President of the Bruhat Bengaluru Hotel Owners' Association, stated, "Hotels are already reeling under increased electricity and water tariffs. The additional ₹12 per kg fee will further burden us, increasing monthly costs by up to ₹50,000. This fee is excessive and unscientific. We urge BSWML to reconsider." A representative of the Residents' Welfare Association said, "This steep user fee, introduced without discussions or room for objections, is unacceptable. It must be rolled back."

Compliance and fee structure

Under existing regulations, buildings over 5,000 sq ft and establishments generating more than 100 kg of waste daily are required to manage and process their waste on-site using composting systems. However, many fail to comply with these rules. To enforce compliance, BSWML has proposed a fee structure where non-compliant entities pay ₹12 per kg for waste management, while those with composting facilities pay a reduced fee of ₹3 per kg. BBMP further clarified that the user fee is a temporary measure until all large waste producers establish their own processing facilities. Harish Kumar stressed, "This step is essential to ensure proper waste management and minimise environmental harm. Establishments must take responsibility for their waste until they have operational composting systems."

> **"This step is to ensure proper waste management. Establishments must take responsibility for their waste** – Harish Kumar, BBMP

Industry demands more support

Hotel associations argue that setting up composting facilities on-site is highly impractical due to limited space constraints. They have requested BBMP to allocate suitable land for centralised waste processing units and provide an adequate grace period to implement these systems effectively.

Darkness descends on South End Circle road

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South End Circle, one of the prominent neighbourhoods, has been facing darkness for several months due to non-functional streetlights on its white-topped road. While the stretch of the road is top-notch, it lacks basic street lighting, making it difficult for commuters. The 1.26-kilometre stretch, built for Rs 10.45 crore, was meant to improve infrastructure and ease commuting but is now a source of frustration and safety concerns for residents and commuters.

The lack of lighting has left the area vulnerable to various risks. Dr Saravana, a commuter, pointed out the potential dangers. "This high-end area, which has a library, temple, and park frequented by elders for walks, can become a hotspot for crime activities. Poor visibility can lead to more road accidents involving vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians. The lack of lighting also creates an unwelcoming environment, which could lower property values and increase crime rates," he said.

File Photo

The absence of streetlights has created a sense of fear and discomfort among residents, particularly women, children, and the elderly, who feel unsafe venturing out after dark. Joshua, another commuter, said, "Traveling on roads without street lights creates safety hazards, is stressful, and diminishes the overall commuting experience. The elderly, women, and children will think twice before stepping out. It's very disheartening to see such a well-planned neighbourhood in darkness in this modern era where governments are working towards Brand Bangalore."

> **"Poor visibility can lead to more road accidents involving vehicles, cyclists** – Dr Saravana, commuter

Joshua further added, "Beyond the emotional toll, the practical disadvantages of having a dark stretch are evident. Poor visibility can increase the likelihood of accidents, putting pedestrians and drivers at risk of any untoward incident. The unlit road has also become a deterrent for residents wanting to use the public amenities in the area. Furthermore, the lack of lighting is seen as a failure in urban planning, with the expensive streetlights not serving their purpose."

The commuters pointed out that Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), which allocated significant funds for the road and its lighting infrastructure, needs to address the issue immediately.

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Sidewalk blocked

Wilson Garden

Wilson Garden's main road sidewalk is often blocked by parked vehicles, with no action taken by traffic authorities.

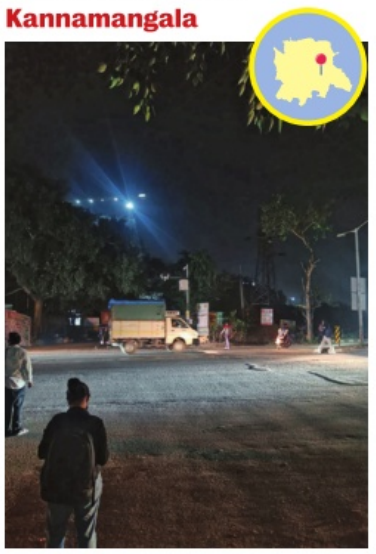
Sewage issue

Hennur

A broken sewage chamber near Hennur Road is causing traffic delays towards the Lingarajapuram flyover, inconveniencing commuters.

Signal demand

Kannamangala



Kannamangala Gate calls for traffic signals to manage traffic effectively.

Two killed in road crash

A road accident on the Devanahalli-Aradeshanahalli Road claimed the lives of two motorcyclists on Sunday. The collision between a car and a bike resulted in the instant deaths of Venkatesh (50) from Uganavadi and Mahesh (30) from Kasavanahalli, who were travelling on the bike.

The impact of the crash crushed the motorcycle, leaving both riders fatally injured. Their bodies have been sent to the Devanahalli Government Hospital for post-mortem examination.

Family members gathered outside the hospital and staged a protest, demanding swift action and justice. A case has been registered at the Vishwanathpur Police Station, and an investigation is underway.

IN CITY

Man arrested for harassing woman

In a swift response, the Ramamurthy Nagar Police arrested a man within two hours after a complaint of harassment was filed against him. The incident, which occurred on the night of November 11, involved a young woman being inappropriately touched by a bike rider while she was walking in a dimly lit area of Ramamurthy Nagar.

The accused, identified as Arun, approached the woman and misbehaved, an act captured on nearby CCTV cameras. The footage of the incident has since gone viral on social media, sparking widespread outrage. The young woman reported the harassment to the Ramamurthy Nagar Police Station, leading to an immediate investigation.

The police tracked down Arun and arrested him within two hours of receiving the complaint. He now faces charges under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

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BBMP's Rs 46,000 cr road project funds 'misused'

Former leader files complaint with ED, accusing palike of misusing funds meant for road development; alleges corruption involving officials and contractors

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Former ruling party leader and President of Anti-corruption Forum, NR Ramesh registered a complaint with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) on Tuesday for allegedly misappropriating Rs 46,300 crore released for road development work from the last 10 years.

In his complaint with the ED, Ramesh has accused the current Chief commissioner of BBMP, Tushar Girinath, along with eight other senior IAS officers, responsible for the alleged misappropriation of 46,292.23 crore allocated for road development in Bengaluru.

The officers named include retired BBMP Commissioners Lakshminarayan, G Kumar Naik (now MP, Raichur Lok Sabha Constituency), Manjunath Prasad, BH Anil Kumar, Gaurav Gupta, and former Administrators Vijaya Bhaskar, Rakesh Singh, and Umashankar.

Additionally, the letter accuses the Chief Engineers of the "Roads Infrastructure Department" and the "Project (Central) Department," as well as Executive Engineers (EEs), Assistant Executive Engineers (AEEs), Joint Commissioners, and Zonal Commissioners of the city's eight zones, of being complicit in the alleged misuse of funds.

Funds reportedly released through various grants

The complaint highlights that the funds, allocated through multiple grants between 2013-14 and 2024 were intended for critical urban infrastructure projects such as road development and drainage improvements in Bengaluru, which were misused. He points to significant discrepancies between the grants disbursed and the actual project execution, alleging widespread financial irregularities and systemic misconduct.

Ramesh has called for a thorough investigation under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and other applicable laws. The letter demands action against several officials and contractors for alleged fraud, misappropriation of public funds, corruption, forgery, and abuse of power.

Complaint filed earlier with the Lokayukta

Ramesh had made the same allegations when he had filed a complaint with the Karnataka Lokayukta in the first week of November.

"These funds were allocated solely for asphalt and concrete work, with 46,300 crores claimed to have been spent. If that's the case, why are the roads in such poor condition today?" Ramesh questioned. "The funds have been misused, with 75% lost to corruption. The BBMP is not adhering to rules and regulations, using substandard raw materials, which is why the roads fail to last," he alleged.

The complaint is accompanied by 4,113 pages of supporting documents, submitted to substantiate the allegations of fraud and to request appropriate action.

Investigation is called under PMLA laws

Lokayukta seizes gold in high-profile raids

The Karnataka Lokayukta conducted raids Wednesday at more than 20 locations in Bengaluru, including the residences and offices of two officers attached to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

Sources in Lokayukta said the raids were being conducted following the tip-off regarding the amassing of disproportionate assets and huge illegal money transactions by officers, builders and industrialists linked to them.

The raids were also being conducted on residences and offices of builders and industrialists, according to sources. The Lokayukta teams seized some documents at the residence of a BBMP Welfare Officer near the Devaiah Park area in Bengaluru. The residence of the Deputy Accountant located at Vyalikaval locality was also raided.

The allegations were raised that the funds of beneficiaries of welfare programmes in BBMP West Zone were fraudulently transferred to the accounts of cooperative societies.

The team headed by Lokayukta Deputy Superintendent of Police Sunil Y Nayak was conducting the raids.

The raids were also conducted on the offices of some cooperative societies in the state capital. The information gathered on officers, builders and industrialists linked in the case included that huge money transactions had been carried out.

In another development, a team of more than 10 Lokayukta officials conducted a surprise raid on the RTO office located in Tumakuru city. The raid took place at around 11 am at the RTO office on BH Road, Tumakuru. Karnataka Lokayukta sleuths had conducted multiple raids across the state on the residences and offices of the government officers in Bengaluru, Bidar, Belagavi, Dharwad on November 12. The sleuths had found huge amounts of gold and other valuables from the residences of officers.

Uber launches audio safety feature

Uber has partnered with a Bengaluru-based NGO and introduced a series of initiatives, including an audio recording feature on its app and a "Women Rider Preference" (WRP) option, particularly during late-night rides.

The WRP feature allows female drivers to accept rides exclusively from female passengers.

Uber said that riders can now record audio during trips if they feel "uncomfortable or concerned about their safety."

"The audio recordings will be encrypted, ensuring they are inaccessible to both drivers and passengers and will only be accessed if submitted as part of a safety report. The feature complies with India's one-party consent law and is available nationwide for both riders and drivers," Uber said. The audio recordings, which Uber said is an "industry first" feature, will automatically get deleted from Uber's system after a specific period.

"The WRP feature helps female earners prioritise their safety, drive for longer hours, and boost their earnings," Uber stated.

Uber said it has partnered with Bengaluru-based NGO, Durga, dedicated to promoting gender equity and safety. "This partnership will include virtual sessions for drivers to understand and address the unique safety concerns of women riders, fostering respectful experience for all," it stated.

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Jumbo calf's electrocution death exposes safety gaps

City-dwellers' constructions in eco-sensitive zones disrupt wildlife movement, increase conflicts, say conservationists

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Case has been filed under the Indian Electricty Act 2003 and Wildlife Protection Act 1972

The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) has booked a person from Jakkalli village in Chamarajanagar district in case of electrocution death of a male elephant calf on Tuesday. A case has been registered under the Indian Electricity Act 2003 and Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

The elephant calf was electrocuted at a farmland located in the notified Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) of Bandipur Tiger Reserve. The farmland had a fence drawing illegal power from overhead power lines.

Conservationists underline that although the concept of ESZ was brought in to avoid degradation of important ecological corridors around protected areas, many activities, including illegal power tapping and private house construction in the notified ESZs around Bandipur Tiger Reserve, are causing damage to wildlife and in some cases, leading to human-wildlife conflicts.

An ESZ acts as a barrier and shock absorber for protected areas, serving as a transition zone from highly protected regions to those with lesser protection. Experts emphasise the need to safeguard ESZs to prevent the isolation of biodiversity fragments, which may not survive in the long term.

ESZs are meant to regulate development sustainably, considering local needs. However, wildlife activists point out that most houses in Bandipur's ESZ are being built by affluent city-dwellers, not locals.

> **Permissions for construction have been sought by rich city dwellers and have received a go-ahead by the department in a matter of a few days**
>
> –Conservationist

"People living in cities like Mangaluru, Bengaluru, and Mysuru are buying land in the area, fencing large portions of the land and thus causing obstruction to the movement of wildlife. More often than not, such obstructions cause wildlife such as elephants and leopards to deviate and reach nearby villages or farmlands, leading to conflicts," said Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

As per ESZ notification of 2012, the activities in these areas are generally regulated and not prohibitory barring a few such as commercial mining, stone quarrying and crushing units; major hydroelectric projects; handling of hazardous substances; discharge of untreated effluents; setting up of brick kilns; setting up of polluting industries, which have high potential for environmental damage.

There is no prohibition on ongoing agriculture and horticulture practices by local communities, dairy farming, aquaculture, fisheries, poultry farms, goat farms, food-related units, etc. Further, activities like infrastructure augmentation including civic amenities, widening of roads, non-polluting industries, etc. are also under the regulated category.

No new commercial construction of any kind is permitted within one kilometre from the boundary of the Protected Area or up to the extent of the ESZ, whichever is nearer.

According to proceedings of the Bandipur ESZ monitoring committee conducted in 2016, a copy of which is with BM, only agricultural activities should be carried out in ESZ. The committee noted that in some areas of Bandipur ESZ, big houses, and rest homes are being constructed for living a luxurious life by city dwellers. These landowners are also creating roads through agricultural fields to reach their properties. The committee had underscored that such activities are bound to disturb the movement of wild animals and will defy the objective of notifying ESZ.

"The committee acknowledged that construction of these houses in ESZ has led to an increase in human-wildlife conflict. People buying land and building houses is defeating the purpose of ESZ and these activities must be regulated. However, a lot of construction has happened since then and the forest department has not been able to curb it. Permissions for construction have been sought by rich city dwellers and have received a go-ahead by the department in a matter of a few days," said a city-based conservationist.

Deadline to install long gone, but vehicle owners hesitant

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Though many vehicles had previously installed VLTDs, panic buttons, and CCTV cameras, the state government declared these devices non-compliant with BIS safety standards and directed owners to replace them with certified equipment. The additional cost, which must be borne by vehicle owners, has led to widespread discontent. A representative of the transport organisations said, "The government has fixed the cost of BIS-certified VLTD and panic button installation at Rs. 7,599 per vehicle, excluding GST. For many owners, replacing older devices adds a significant financial burden. We feel that the government is allegedly using this mandate as a revenue-generation scheme. In fact, High-quality VLTDs and panic buttons are available in the market at lower prices than the government-prescribed rates. If the government provides financial assistance under the Nirbhaya Scheme, it would ease our burden."

Suspension of fitness certification

"We are closely monitoring the situation. The deadline has passed, and we urge vehicle owners to comply for public safety," said a senior transport official. Confusion prevails among vehicle owners regarding the mandate. Meanwhile, the Transport Department has taken a hard stance by halting the renewal of fitness certificates (FC) for non-compliant vehicles. Additionally, vehicle owners failing to renew their FCs face a penalty of Rs. 5,000 for each violation.

Which vehicles require mandatory installation?

The mandate applies to public service vehicles, including yellow-board taxis, maxi cabs, government and private buses, contract carriage vehicles, school buses, and national permit goods vehicles. Approximately 5.8 lakh vehicles in the state are yet to install VLTDs and panic buttons. With the deadline expired, fitness certificates will not be renewed for non-compliant vehicles.

Authorities plan to relocate centre instead of repairing it

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

With the intervention of social activists and women and child development department officials, electricity was restored at the anganwadi centre four months ago. However, the Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) engineer disconnected electricity as the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) assistant executive engineer failed to pay the electricity bill for three months.

As per the Article 25 of the UNCRC, someone who works for the government should check upon the care, protection and health of children. Due to the failure of authorities concerned to monitor the functioning of anganwadi centre at Lakkasandra, the number of children began dwindling due to lack of basic amenities and unhygienic conditions.

"It is the responsibility of the child and women development officials to monitor the functioning of the anganwadi centre at Lakkasandra. Maintaining an anganwadi centre in such unhygienic conditions is against the Article 25 of the UNCRC. The authorities must provide all amenities at the centre. The Bescom engineer has to restore electricity at the anganwadi soon," said Nagasimha G Rao of Child Rights Trust.

When informed, BBMP assistant executive engineer told BM that he got transferred to Lakkasandra just 10 months ago. "No one has brought the disconnection of electricity to the anganwadi center to my attention. I am yet to receive the electricity bill for the anganwadi center. I will make arrangements to make payment if the anganwadi teacher or helper gives me the electricity bill," said the assistant executive engineer.

It is said the staff working at the anganwadi centre has to depend on neighbours to get water to the toilet as the authorities have forgotten to ensure even water supply. As of now, the anganwadi centre is taking care of eight children.

Electric meter is removed from anganwadi center at Lakkasandra

"We are in talks with a non-governmental organization (NGO) for reconstructing the anganwadi centre. I am making arrangements to relocate the anganwadi to Narayanapura," said Women and Child Development Department supervisor Sindhu MA.

However, Arun Prasad, a social activist, opined that relocation of the anganwadi centre would cause inconvenience to the parents as Narayanapura is far away from their locality. "It is better if the authorities repair the anganwadi centre, provide water supply and electricity instead of demolishing the existing structure and reconstructing it," said Arun Prasad.

So till the right decision is made, the hapless children have no option but to wait and watch.

B'luru to Kochi Vande Bharat train not exactly cancelled

Railway Minister clarifies that it is ongoing process, service not cancelled but was temporary arrangement

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File photo of the Ernakulam–Bengaluru Vande Bharat Express train at the Ernakulam station on July 31

The Bengaluru-Ernakulam rail corridor, one of the busiest, sees thousands of passengers traveling daily. Regular commuters were left puzzled when the much-talked-about Vande Bharat Express service on this route appeared to vanish as quickly as it arrived. So, what really happened?

Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw provided clarity in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday. He explained that the Vande Bharat train wasn't "cancelled" but rather temporarily introduced as a special service. From July 31 to August 26, 2024, the Ernakulam-Bengaluru Cantt. Special Train (06001/06002) used a spare Vande Bharat rake to manage the surge in passenger traffic. This special service operated alongside nine pairs of regular trains already catering to the corridor.

Vaishnaw also pointed out that the perception of cancellation might have arisen from this temporary arrangement. He emphasised that the introduction of new train services, including Vande Bharat Express, is an ongoing process, dependent on factors like traffic demand, operational feasibility, and resource availability. So, while the Vande Bharat Express might not be a permanent fixture on this route yet, its reappearance is always a possibility as the Indian Railways continues to evaluate and adapt to the network's dynamic needs.

No new Chikkaballapur-Puttaparthi rail route

The Railways have clarified that there are no immediate plans to establish a direct rail connection between Chikkaballapur and Puttaparthi. Currently, connectivity in the region is provided by the Dharmavaram-Puttaparthi-Penukonda and Dharmavaram-Makkajipalli-Penukonda railway lines, which link to the Yelahanka-Bengaluru route. For years, there have been demands to connect the Yelahanka-Chikkaballapur line to Puttaparthi, offering an alternative route via Yelahanka-Doddaballapur-Penukonda-Dharmavaram. Addressing this in the Lok Sabha, Vaishnaw stated that while a survey for the proposed Chikkaballapur-Sri Sathya Sai Prashanti Nilayam (Puttaparthi) line (103 km) has been completed, the project has been shelved due to low traffic projections.

"Additionally, a Final Location Survey (FLS) for a Chikkaballapur-Gauribidanur rail line (44 km) has been sanctioned, and a Detailed Project Report (DPR) is underway. However, project approvals are based on factors like cost-effectiveness, last-mile connectivity, operational feasibility, and socio-economic considerations," the minister said, adding that there has been remarkable progress in enhancing Karnataka's rail infrastructure. "Between 2021 and 2024, surveys were sanctioned for 56 projects, including 19 new railway lines and 37 doubling projects, covering a total span of 6,159 kilometers. As of April 2024, 31 projects—comprising 2,556 km of new lines and 1,284 km of track doubling—are in various stages of planning, approval, or construction, with a cumulative cost of 47,016 crore.

> **From July 31 to Aug 26, the Ernakulam-Bengaluru Cantt. train used a spare Vande Bharat rake to manage surge in passenger traffic**

Of these, significant advancements have been achieved. New line projects totaling 395 km have been commissioned with an expenditure of 7,592 crore. Similarly, 907 km of doubling projects have been completed, with 9,791 crore invested in the process. The Railways also highlighted a substantial increase in budget allocation for Karnataka's rail development. The annual outlay has surged ninefold since 2014, jumping from an average of 835 crore during 2009-14 to a projected 7,559 crore in 2024-25. This marked increase underscores the prioritization of Karnataka's rail connectivity and infrastructure expansion," he added.

Challenges

The Railways cited geological, topographical, and environmental factors as challenges affecting project timelines. To accelerate implementation, the government has introduced measures like Gati Shakti units, increased fund allocations, field-level delegation of powers, and regular coordination with state governments for land acquisition and clearances.

Kalasa-Banduri: DKS urges Centre to speed up environmental nod to project

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister and Irrigation Minister DK Shivakumar on Wednesday called upon Union Minister for Environment and Forest, Bhupender Yadav, to expedite environmental clearance for the Kalasa-Banduri irrigation project in Karnataka.

Shivakumar submitted an appeal to the minister to expedite the forest and wildlife clearance for the Kalasa Nala Diversion Scheme and forest clearance for the Banduri Nala Diversion Scheme.

Kalasa-Banduri Project is a dam project that aims to divert water from the Mahadayi River to the Mala-prabha River basin in Karnataka.

The project's goal is to provide drinking water to drought-hit districts in northern Karnataka, including Belagavi, Dharwad, Bagalkot, and Gadag.

The project involves building barrages on the Kalasa and Banduri streams, which are tributaries of the Mahadayi River.

"Kalasa-Banduri is a critical project for the people of Karnataka. Despite adherence to all statutory and procedural requirements, Karnataka's proposal continues to face delays. It is imperative to resolve this at the earliest to avoid further impact on this vital project," Shivakumar said.

He added: "The 80th meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife had deferred, in a meeting held in October 2024, Karnataka's proposal to use 10.88 hectares of forest land for the Kalasa project in Western Ghats.

The Board had directed Karnataka to submit a written representation addressing legal issues raised in the meeting."

> **Project's goal is to provide drinking water to drought-hit districts in northern Karnataka**

He said that the National Board for Wildlife had rejected Karnataka's proposal citing legal disputes between Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra related to Mahadayi Water Dispute Tribunal's award, which was pending before the Supreme Court.

He further added that however, Karnataka had contested the decision of the National Board for Wildlife stating that the Supreme Court does not restrain Karnataka from proceeding with the project.

—IANS

IN BRIEF

Bomb hoax at private bank

A bomb threat was reported at HSBC Bank on MG Road, prompting an immediate response from the city police. The threat, which was sent via email, led to a swift evacuation of staff and customers, as the bomb squad and dog squad launched an intensive search of the premises.

Authorities combed through the bank, checking all areas for any suspicious objects. After all the heightened security measures, no explosives were found. Thorough investigation by the police confirmed that the bomb threat was a hoax.

The staff at HSBC Bank expressed their concern as news of the bomb threat spread rapidly, causing temporary panic. However, no injuries or damage were reported, and the situation was quickly brought under control. —BMB

Mobile phone theft at bus stand

On the bustling streets of Kundalahalli Colony, when commuters were boarding a bus, a thief seized an opportunity to snatch a mobile phone and make a run for it, on Wednesday. But little did the thief know that help was already on the way thanks to the quick reflexes of the airport traffic police personne. The thief was soon arrested and the stolen phone went back where it belonged.

The incident happened when commuters were boarding and alighting from a bus. The man stole a mobile phone from one of the passengers and fled the scene. The Airport Traffic Police Station personnel acted promptly with the help of the public. The officers, along with onlookers, pursued the fleeing suspect. The chase led them to the HAL area, where the accused was successfully apprehended. —BMB

Cabinet shuffle talk kicks off lobbying

Congress Ministers and aspirants for Cabinet berths are indulging in hectic lobbying ahead of the reshuffle after the winter session in the last week of December.

Buoyed by the emphatic victory in the bypolls of three Assembly seats, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar are taking up the exercise to drop about eight non-performing ministers from the Cabinet and induct new faces.

Sources said the Congress high command has given a green signal for the Cabinet reshuffle and Siddaramaiah is keen on it after the bypolls to consolidate his position in the face of charges of alleged "corruption" and "favouritism" against him.

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said that the matter of cabinet reshuffling is entirely left to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.—IANS

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I,SHASHI Shree Sakkare Gollahalli Nataraj R/O Mangalamba Nilaya, No 186, 2nd ward, Rajaghatta, Bengaluru Rural, Blr-561203 changed my name from Shashi Shree Sakkare Gollahalli Nataraju to Shashi Shree Sakkare Gollahalli Nataraj for all future purposes.

I Thejaswini Shubhash Pandith D/o Shubhash Pandith K.M R/o #106/3, 4th Flr, (#29,5), Lakshmi L/o, 4th Cross, GB Palya (Hongasandra), B'lore-068, have changed my name to Tejaswini Shubhash Pandith vide affidavit Dtd:27/11/24 bef - ore Notary M. Rajendra, B'lore.

I Deepa Bhojram Shetty R/O 1111-prestige Brooklyn Heights,kariyappa road,opposite bannashankari temple, shankambarinagar, Bangalore-560078 have changed my name as Deepa shetty.

I Manjunath D S/o Doddaiah R/a Hulse, Handli Po, Somavarpet Tq, Kodagu-571235, Karnataka I have changed my name to Manjunatha D Vide Affidavit dated on 27/11/2024 Sworn Before Notary V Anjanappa Bangalore

I, Parameshwara Devendrappa R/o No.11/22, Tannery road, Basappa lane, Fraser town, Bengaluru 560005 have changed my name to Parameshwar Devendrappa affidavit Dt.27/11/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, SWATIK. S P R/O No 11707, Tower-1, Nikoo Homes- 1, Bharatiya City, Hegde Nagar, Thanisandra Main Road, Blr-64, have changed my name from S P. SWATHIK to SWATIK. S P for all future purposes.

I, FATHIMA UNNISA R/a. No.18/16, G Floor, 9th Main Rd, 4th Crs, BTM Layout 1st Stage Bengaluru-29. I, have changed my name to FATHIMUNNISA, vide affidavit dated 18/03/2024 Sworn before Notary: M. Rajendra, Bangalore

I Harshada Pravin Bhambure , W/o Kapil Subhash Dongare R/o Subramanya Nagar, Bangalore have changed my name from Harshada Pravin Bhambure to Harshada Kapil Dongare for all future purpose

I, Sachin R U R/o 09, 5th Cross, Muneshwara Block ,A Sector Amruthnagar Bengaluru - 560092 have changed my minor daughter's name from Heshika R S to Heshika S R for all purposes.

I, Rangegowda B.S, S/o Sannaswamy, R/at Baragur Village, Doddamagge Post, Arakalagud Talluk, Hassan District, Karnataka State-573142 have changed my name to Nikith Rangegowda B.S, vide affidavit dt: 25.11.2024 before notary Devaraja E, Bangalore.

I, Sachin Arora S/o Virender Kumar Arora R/o Brigade Cosmopolis C-1712, 286, Whitefield main road, Bengaluru 560066 have changed my name to Sachin Virender Arora Affidavit Dt.27/11/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Shruthi S P D/o Shankar W/o Deepak Koovethodi R/O No 354,1st Floor 17th Main,B Block,Vijayanagar 3rd Stage, Mysuru, Karnataka -570017, have changed my name to Shruthi Deepak.

I Sneha D/O, Bheema Upadhyaya R/o #140, 4th Cross, Classic Pleasant Ville, Jp Nagar 8th Phase, Bengaluru 560062 have changed my name to Sneha Upadhyaya.

I Suraj.V S/O, P Venkata Rao R/o B1-w1-804, Vasathi Avanthe Apartments, Rachenahalli, Jakkur, Bangalore-560077 have changed my name to SURAJ PUTHANE.

I, Gulzar Hussain S/o Mohamed Abbas R/o 400 E 9th Cross 2nd Block Jayanagar B'lore-560011 have changed my name to Shafiq Ahamed.

I, Priyanka Gupta, R/o Bangalore, D/o Mr. B.P. Gupta, has changed my name from Priyanka Gupta to Priyanka Samji for all future services

I Rajeev Harshad Joshi S/O, Harshad Rai Joshi R/o Flat 104, 47/1 Royal Vistara Apt Srirampura Mn Rd, Amruthahalli, Jakkur, Bengaluru - 560092 have changed my name to Rajeev Harshad Rai Joshi.

LOST & FOUND

DOCUMENT LOST

I, Rajasekharaiah .J.S residing at No.2, 5th Main Road, 8th Cross, Srinidhi Layout, Konanakunte, J.P. Nagar 7th Stage, Bangalore-560062, stating that. I have lost the sale deed of Site No.1502 (B Khata) at HMT Layout, Nagasandra on 19.11.2024. I have given a complaint (LR No.1342067/2024) to Bangalore City Police on 19.11.2024 in this regard. If anyone finds the above said sale deed documents contact the above address or mobile number 9483959626.

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Why so serious?

Understanding health, sustainability issues can be fun and games

By using an engaging format and features such as a scoreboard and rewards, games can help raise awareness of an issue or disease. Gaming has grown up.

Players are learning about climate change, hurricane safety, type 1 diabetes and infection control practices during a pandemic.

And they are having fun while doing so.

Serious games — so-called because they are designed for purposes beyond pure entertainment — are being used for several purposes.

These include encouraging people to adopt healthy lifestyle changes, develop better social skills, be persuaded and recruited to various causes, and for campaigning in politics. Such games can also be used to teach medical students how to diagnose certain conditions.

Many serious games have been developed for diseases such as cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, autism and obesity.

For example, a modified version of the Mario brothers' computer game helps children learn about type 1 diabetes and how to better control their blood sugar levels.

The game challenges players to manage Mario's blood sugar levels by ensuring he makes healthy dietary choices and gets enough physical activity.

Such games score over social media platforms as tools to create awareness because social media can spread misinformation too.

Games, on the other hand, are designed and evaluated by experts. By using an engaging format and features such as a scoreboard, bonuses and other incentives, serious games help raise awareness of an issue or disease.

Catch me if you can

During COVID-19, researchers at BML Munjal university designed a smartphone game called Unlock Me to raise awareness about safe hygiene practices during the pandemic.

Unlock Me simulates real-life situations and experiences to help players understand infection control practices such as using hand sanitiser and social distancing, to reduce their risk of contracting COVID.

In the game the player is a police officer who patrols the streets searching for people violating the lockdown.

The challenge is to catch the violators within the given timeframe by creating checkpoints in the game map.

A single-player game, Unlock Me was developed by considering classic gaming parameters such as fantasy, mystery, goals, stimuli, challenge and control.

For instance, the element of fantasy was incorporated by deploying the player as a police officer patrolling the streets.

The stimuli were added with the use of three-dimensional objects, graphics and the inclusion of special sound effects.

To drive home the message of infection control practices, the developers introduced certain features such as COVID bombs.

These bombs are game obstacles created by violators and infect the player if they contact them. These bombs are meant to convey that SARS-CoV-2 can stay on surfaces or be airborne.

Even if the COVID-19 infected violator has left the area, the virus can persist and infect the player if they come in contact with the bomb. While patrolling, the police officer might encounter these bombs and have to disinfect surfaces. They can do this by collecting sanitisers and temporary shields that protect them from lockdown violators.

The repercussions of getting caught by the police officer make the players realise the importance of social distancing.

Busting myths, one level at a time

Game-based learning has been used in the education and health sectors since the 2000s.

An analysis of the use of serious games for lifestyle management suggests serious games positively impact users by increasing adoption of healthy lifestyle measures such as drinking water, eating vegetables and increasing physical activity.

Learning by doing methodology in educational games helps develop knowledge and encourages positive behaviour by users. For example, mobile game Jetset allows travellers to keep up to date with the current security regulations at international airports. Players learn about the different security measures at 100 airports worldwide, and get virtual souvenirs if they are playing from one of the airport sites. Serious games can also be designed for more complex goals such as acquiring specific skills.

According to a review of 512 games, 83 percent of the 47 knowledge and skill acquisition games were found to be impactful and provided the desired learning outcomes.

Raising awareness through play

Then there are games that raise community awareness of issues.

For instance, the eVision game educates people about environmental threats.

The game uses augmented reality and mobile computing technology to allow users to search for sources of pollution near them with their mobile phones.

Impact tests suggest that eVision played an important role in alerting users to sustainability issues and even influenced their behaviour: users' experience with the game influenced what type of car they went onto buy.

Another game that creates awareness of hurricane safety in Malaysia provides a safety checklist and asks users to perform the tasks according to the list.

When the game was tested, 90 percent of the participants said that they were able to learn hurricane safety through the game. Another game called Dr. Ludens' LSG educates people about two neglected tropical diseases — visceral leishmaniasis and American cutaneous leishmaniasis — by using a rural farm set-up to help users relate to their present environment.

The players have to perform specific actions such as remove infected dogs, clean leaves and dry water puddles. An in-game quiz to gain additional points encourages deeper learning about the disease and improves the player's ability to retain information over an extended period.

Another gamification tool that encourages deeper learning is a mythbusters feature that was used in the COVID game Unlock Me.

This was developed to get around a flaw common in many serious games — they lack a mechanism to help players retain information. Unlock Me uses this mythbusters feature to teach players facts from the World Health Organization rebutting some common misconceptions about COVID.

The game has ten levels, and as soon as the player reaches a new level, they get to answer a COVID-related question.

The questions appear like flashcards on the screen to help users remember the information easily and eventually take the players to the mythbusters feature.

Measuring the impact of serious games

They have lofty ambitions but it can be difficult to measure how good educational games are at changing attitudes and behaviours. To do so requires testing gameplay features with players again and again.

Data generated this way can then be fed back into game development and can help improve the design significantly.

This was the case with Unlock Me, which was able to prove that the game was particularly successful in helping 17 to 21-year-olds users learn about COVID. Comparing the average scores of a pre-game questionnaire on COVID awareness with in-game questions showed an increase in learning by 53 percent. However, the data also showed elderly players faced more challenges in completing all the levels, and hence, learning about COVID. Developing an awareness-based educational game requires a deep analysis of the requirements of the player to create good user experiences.

Most serious games do not use a data-backed approach to capture players' experiences.

Traditionally games are evaluated by rating them on a scale. This needs to be backed up with empirical data generated by analysing real-time player behaviour to validate the responses.

Accurately assessing player experiences during gameplay can help build more enjoyable games and also help apply the learnings to other fields.

This is why measuring player experience is becoming an increasing focus of research.

(By Nishtha Phutela, BML Munjal University in Haryana, 360info.org)

All you need to know about...

Insulin resistance

Risk of aortic stenosis

Insulin resistance can increase the risk of aortic stenosis -- a common heart valve disease -- in men over the age of 45, finds a study on Wednesday.

The study published in the peer-reviewed journal Annals of Medicine may open doors for new treatments for aortic stenosis, which can lead to life-threatening heart failure.

When does aortic stenosis occur?

Aortic stenosis occurs when the aortic valve narrows or does not open fully, reducing blood flow from the heart to the body. If not addressed timely, the valve will gradually thicken and stiffen, making the heart work harder to pump blood.

What is insulin resistance?

Researchers from the Kuopio University Hospital, in Finland identified several biomarkers -- fasting insulin, insulin at 30 minutes and 120 minutes, proinsulin, and serum C-peptide -- related to high insulin resistance in people with aortic stenosis.

A person is said to be insulin resistant when his or her body is unable to respond well to insulin. This prompts the body to produce more insulin than normal to manage blood sugar levels.

Other risk factors

Importantly, the team found that these biomarkers remained significant predictors of aortic stenosis, even after adjusting for other known risk factors, such as body mass index (BMI) and high blood pressure, or excluding participants with diabetes or an aortic valve malformation.

"This novel finding highlights that insulin resistance may be a significant and modifiable risk factor for aortic stenosis," said lead author Dr Johanna Kuusisto, from the Kuopio University Hospital, in Finland.

As insulin resistance is becoming increasingly common, "managing metabolic health could be a new approach to reduce the risk of aortic stenosis and improve cardiovascular health in ageing populations", Kuusisto added.

—IANS

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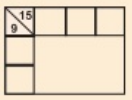
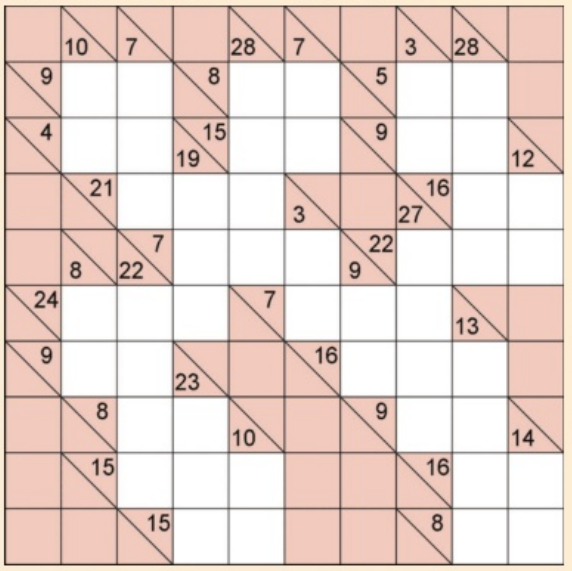
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

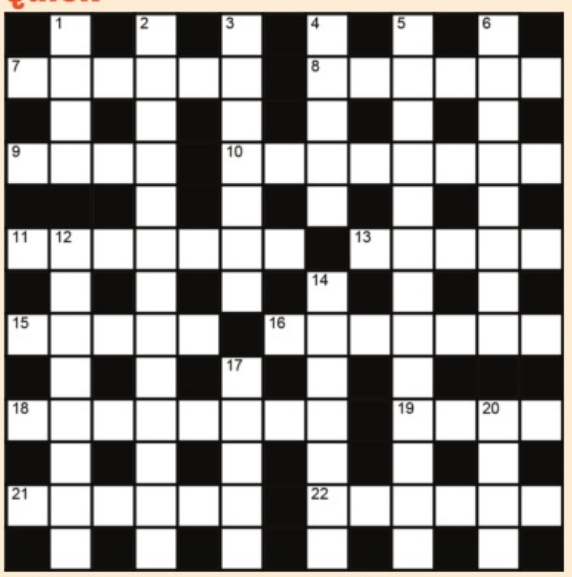


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Thin coating (6)
8 Bird house (6)
9 Inclined passage (4)
10 Evaluate, assess (8)
11 Point of view (7)
13 Pastime or game (5)
15 Natural ability (5)
16 Perspired (7)
18 Precision (8)
19 In _ __ : stagnant? (1,3)
21 Benevolent or compassionate (6)
22 Arrested colloquially (6)

DOWN

1 A table-land (4)
2 Upright; vertical (13)
3 The ___ : Almighty God? (7)
4 Quite content (5)
5 Vanishing (13)
6 Safeguard; keep (8)
12 Al fresco bar at the Oberoi (4,4)
14 Wielding influence; oscillating (7)
17 Broad valleys (5)
20 Internet patron (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: S EQUALS G

ZJXJDSJ YM QCBJD TYEJ HYBYDS O AQS HJWOGMJ BUJ AQS HYB FQG.

Linemaro

Are you sure you are not a tower? Eiffel for you

Mindchow

Talk about your blessings more than your burdens

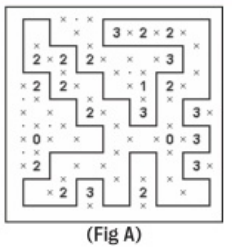
Joke of the day

He is so rich, he has custom-printed deposit slips with room for more zeroes.

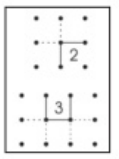
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)



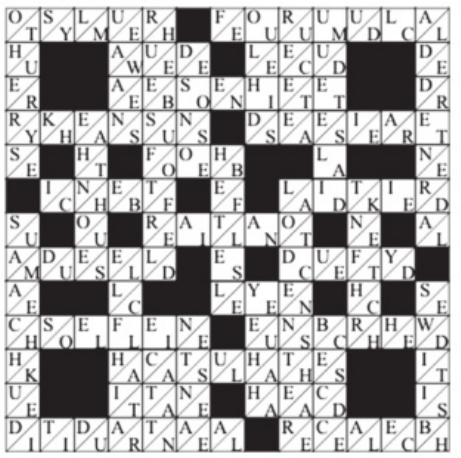
(Fig B) Not Allowed

How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)

Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9			K	

ACROSS

1 Posh C; 6 Aural;
7 Noise; 8 Me and;
9 LT yak

DOWN

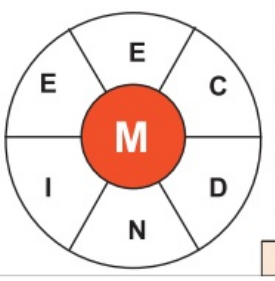
1 Tecal; 2 Omaha;
3 Seoul; 4 PR kin;
5 Andy's

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

3	4
4	5
6	8
11	16
24	37
58	?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

10 Average; **12** Good; **14** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

5						3		
3	2						1	8
			3		6			4
7					3	6		
	6		9		2		3	
		4	5					9
6			4		5			
8	1						4	6
		2						7

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 7

4 5 7 9

Medium = 14

2 6 7 7

Hard = 29

2 5 7 5

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

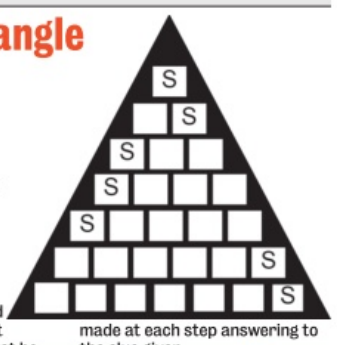
Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Tail is moved. 3. Tree is moved. 4. Sweater is different. 5. Window is smaller. 6. Spot is added on dog.

Riddler

A mirrored pair of crystal caves, Its image on the Widow's skin. Inhabited by desert slaves, All of whom are trapped within. As they tumble to their graves Drawn down through a passage thin A score and four the turns they make Each time that the world spins. What is it?

Alpha triangle

1 Curved letter
2 ___and them
3 Dine
4 Egg on
5 Sudden gush
6 Explodes
7 Theatrical groups

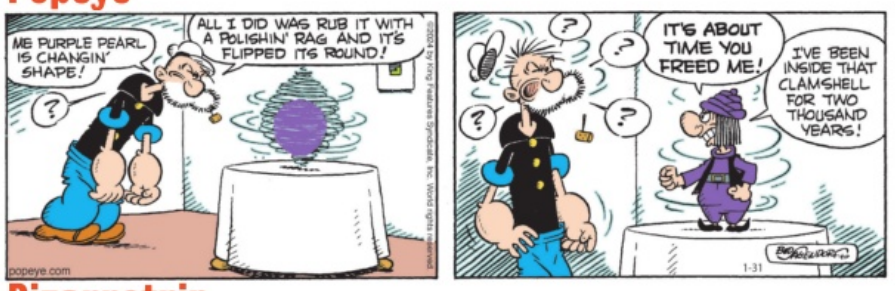


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

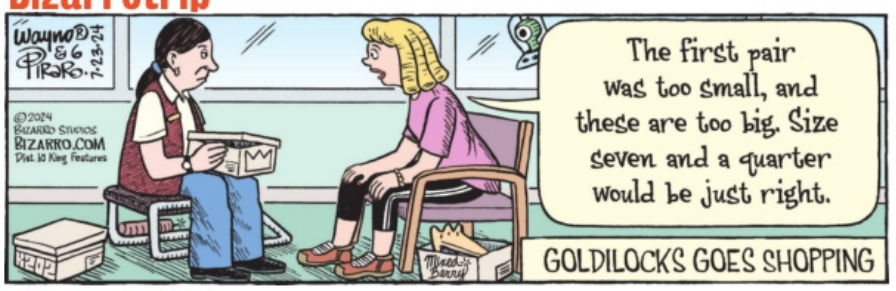
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


ME PURPLE PEARL IS CHANGIN' SHAPE!
ALL I DID WAS RUB IT WITH A POLISHIN' RAG AND IT'S FLIPPED ITS ROUND!
IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU FREED ME!
I'VE BEEN INSIDE THAT CLAMSHELL FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS!
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

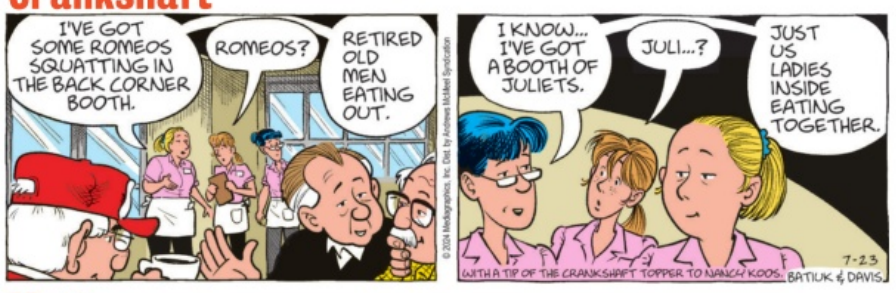

Wayno & Piraro 7-23-24
The first pair was too small, and these are too big. Size seven and a quarter would be just right.
GOLDILOCKS GOES SHOPPING
BIZARRO.COM

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

VOLCANOES TAKE SOME TIME TO MAKE.
HOW ARE YOU GONNA MAKE ONE IN FIVE HOURS, ALL WHILE GOING TO CLASS?
TH-THAT'S PLENTY OF TIME! I'M NOT WORRIED!!
YOUR SWEAT SAYS OTHERWISE.

Crankshaft


I'VE GOT SOME ROMEOS SQUATTING IN THE BACK CORNER BOOTH.
ROMEOS?
RETIRED OLD MEN EATING OUT.
I KNOW... I'VE GOT A BOOTH OF JULIETS.
JULI...?
JUST US LADIES INSIDE EATING TOGETHER.
WITH A TIP OF THE CRANKSHAFT TOPPER TO NANCY KOOS.
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you might not feel your best as old health issues may resurface, making you feel upset. It is advised to think carefully before making any choices, as impatience and haste could lead to poor decisions. It is also advised to avoid keeping money loose, as you might end up spending it on unnecessary items.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today brings peace of mind. You may plan to invest capital in your business, improving its liquidity and boosting your financial health. Romantic moments with your spouse will enhance family harmony. Singles may find a suitable match. Lovebirds might decide to get married. Students will be blessed with the fruits of their good karma.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you will feel very happy as your losses turn into profits. Your seniors may appreciate your efforts, possibly leading to changes in position, responsibilities, or even promotions at work. Your opponents and hidden enemies will remain under control. Singles and couples might make important marriage-related decisions with the support of friends or family.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you are blessed by the moon; you may be happy and relieved from the challenges of the previous week. The blessings and hard work will pay off, enabling you to resume postponed projects with the help of your subordinates. Your business might see gains, giving a boost to your financial status.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may feel dull and experience some health issues. It's advised to delay any business investments or the start of new ventures. Moreover, losses in business are possible, as gains may turn into setbacks.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, the moon's blessings will enable you to make quick and confident decisions on the professional front. New business opportunities may arise, boosting your confidence. With the support of your partner, you may embark on innovative projects that promise growth in the near future.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, the moon's blessings will enhance your performance at work. Promotions or transfers may bring gains, and you might even consider changing jobs. Your relationship with your boss will improve. Chronic health issues will resolve now, bringing happiness to your family.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, the moon's blessings bring confidence and decisiveness; you may take important decisions without hesitation and seize opportunities effectively. Spending time and money with family and friends will bring joy. Lovebirds will enjoy happy moments together. Job seekers may find suitable opportunities with the help of friends.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you might feel dull and uninspired. Arrogance could affect both your personal and professional life. A lack of confidence may hinder your creativity at work. So it's important to stay patient and avoid unnecessary conflicts.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, it's advised to be mindful of your straightforward nature, as loose or harsh words could upset those around you. You must avoid spending money on unnecessary items. While your mind might be working quickly, it's important to make decisions patiently and thoughtfully.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, quick decision-making will benefit your daily life. With support from colleagues, you may succeed in overcoming difficult challenges. Property-related disputes with siblings could be resolved. Short trips are also on the cards, bringing some relief.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today, you must be cautious about your straightforwardness, as it may unintentionally hurt others. You are advised to avoid unnecessary expenditures on worthless items. You may take quick decisions in all aspects; however, it's essential to approach significant decisions with patience and clarity.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
= √ (√16+9)+4)
= (√ (√25)+4)
= (√5+4)
=√9
= 3

RIDDLER
An hourglass

STRIKE OUT

H		W	E	D		L	E	U						D
E		I	A	N		H	A	D						S
K		A	C	T	U	A	T	E		I				
C	O	L	L	I	E		E	S	C	H	E	W		
A		C		L	Y	E		C		S				
M	U	S	E	D		E		D	U	T	Y			
S		O		E	A	T	N	O		E		A		
	C	H	E	F		E		L	I	K	E	D		
E		T		F	E	B		L				N		
R	H	E	S	U	S		D	E	S	I	R	E		
H		E	B	O	N	I	T	E				D		
T	Y	L	E	R		F	O	R	M	U	L	A		

FAST FIVE

C	H	O	P	S
L	A	U	R	A
E	O	S	I	N
A	M	E	N	D
T	A	L	K	Y

QUOTE UNCODE
Revenge is often like biting a dog because the dog bit you.

QUICK

		B		R		S		G		E		R		
	H		U		M		A		N		E		K	E
	L		L		I				I		N		S	
A		C		C		U		R		A		C		Y
	O												R	
F		L		A		I		R		S		W		E
	O												D	
O		P		I		N		I		O		N		S
	E												T	
R		A		M		P		A		P		R		A

MENSA PUZZLE
92. Working from top to bottom, left to right, add together the first two numbers and subtract 3 to give the next value along.

BULL'S EYE
deem, denim, diem, dime, ENDEMIC, medic, mend, mice, mien, mince, minced, mind, mine, mined

SUDOKU

4	5	2	6	3	8	1	9	7
8	1	3	2	9	7	5	4	6
6	7	9	4	1	5	2	8	3
2	3	4	5	6	1	8	7	9
1	6	8	9	7	2	4	3	5
7	9	5	8	4	3	6	2	1
9	8	1	3	2	6	7	5	4
3	2	6	7	5	4	9	1	8
5	4	7	1	8	9	3	6	2

ALPHA TRIANGLE
S, Us, Sup, Spurt, Spurt, Erupts, Troupes.

GO FIGURE
Easy
7 – 5 – 4 + 9 = 7
Medium
7 x 6 / 2 – 7 = 14
Hard
5 + 7 x 2 + 5 = 29

LOOP

KAKURO

9	7	2	8	7	1	4		
4	3	1	9	6	9	2	7	
		4	9	8	3	9	8	5
		8	2	4	1	2	9	7
	9	6		1	8	6	2	
	8	3	4		2	1	4	
					9	8	1	3
						9	6	5

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Back to college— Sonali Bendre took to her Instagram handle to share a post reminiscing on her college days. On Wednesday, the actress posted a series of her photos posing against the backdrop of a college

BangaloreMirror | 12
Thursday, November 28, 2024
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Entertainment Industry Promotion

'I want to do everything'

Sanya Malhotra likes to chase challenges and rise up to them

Sanya Malhotra marked her debut in movies with Aamir Khan and Nitesh Tiwari's Dangal, and since there on she has chosen her own path with films like Pagglait, Kathal, Jawan and Sam Bahadur. The actress will now be seen in Harman Baweja and Arati Kadav's Mrs which is an official remake of Malayalam film The Great Indian Kitchen. The film talks about the intrinsic patriarchy especially for a daughter-in-law, and how she breaks the shackles and finds her own voice and stands up for it. The film premiered at IFFI this year.

In an exclusive interview with ETimes, the actress opened up about her realization during the shooting of the film. She said, "My realization through the process was that there is so much to learn and unlearn and I became aware of so many things. Like when I see my mother, I feel that there is this unsaid pressure on women. For example it is being that the route to man's heart is through his stomach .. I dont think that is true ..that is not the ultimate way to show love or care…. There are so many other ways like you can share the load and show the same kind of care and love..appreciate them."

"I like to do everything, I want to do everything. I don't want to put myself in a box and be in my comfort zone... I'm constantly chasing challenges, I'm chasing something that will make me grow. I'm very lucky that I'm getting to work with amazing filmmakers, and hence I'm doing different things," she added when asked about her different film choices.

Sanya would be next seen in Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari with Varun Dhawan and Janhvi Kapoor. The film is being directed by Shashank Khaitan.

—**Jigar Shah, ETimes**

First-ever movie in Sandalwood to start ticket sales before release date

In an exciting move, Out of Syllabus, the upcoming romantic comedy written and directed by Pradeep Doddaiah, has already begun selling tickets—before even announcing its release date. This bold strategy is setting the stage for a unique cinematic experience, one that breaks traditional norms and highlights the growing influence of youth culture in Kannada cinema.

This movie produced under Ad6 entertainment banner by K Vijayakala Sudhakar. With a fresh and youthful storyline, Out of Syllabus explores the unpredictable journey of love, relationships, and self-discovery. The movie's lead actor, who has captured the hearts of over five lakh students across Karnataka through his captivating speeches and stand-up comedy performances, is bringing his established fan base to the big screen. His popularity among students, especially in the academic and youth circles, is expected to drive at least 50,000 ticket sales before the movie's official release, ensuring a grand opening and positioning the film for a broader, more competitive market.

This innovative approach to ticket sales is just one of the ways Out of Syllabus is shaking up the industry. The film also boasts a significant milestone—over 10,000 students have actively participated in the movie's production, making it one of the largest student-driven cinematic projects in recent history. The involvement of so many young talents not only adds authenticity to the film's narrative but also ensures a genuine connection with its target audience: students.

The teaser for the movie, which has already garnered attention, showcases the vibrant energy and chemistry at the heart of the film. With its focus on youthful romance and the realities of student life, the movie promises to be a refreshing take on the genre, while also creating a space for student voices within the creative process.

—**BMB**

Completely traditional

Sobhita Dhulipala will be seen wearing beautiful jewellery, including maathapatti, bajubandh, and kamarbandh, along with other statement pieces for her wedding to Naga Chaitanya. According to News18, Sobhita will wear a variety of traditional jewelry for her wedding, including a Baasikam (thread across the forehead), Maathapatti, Bullaki (septum nose pin), Surya and Chandra motifs on her head, along with Vanki, Bajubandh, and Kamarbandh.

The report also mentioned that with these accessories, Sobhita will stay true to her roots, radiating a pure traditional Indian elegance.

It was previously reported that Sobhita and Chaitanya's wedding will involve over eight hours of wedding rituals. According to a source close to Sobhita, the couple is following Telugu Brahmin traditions for their wedding, which will include these lengthy ceremonies. The report further mentioned that to honour the cultural aspects and pay attention to every detail of a traditional Telugu wedding, Sobhita and Naga Chaitanya are going all out with an over eight-hour long, old-school wedding. The couple is set to marry on December 4, with Sobhita Dhulipala wearing a traditional Kanjivaram silk saree, adorned with real gold zari.

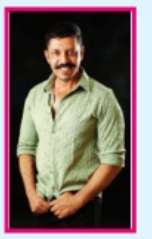
A source also told the portal that Sobhita chose a beautiful Kanjivaram silk saree with real gold zari while shopping with her mother. She is also getting a simple white khadi saree woven in Ponduru, Andhra Pradesh, along with a matching set for Naga Chaitanya, in keeping with tradition. Sobhita is personally involved in every detail, adding a special and heartfelt touch to her wedding day.

—**ETimes**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Real & reel



Madhu Mandagere, who works with the Railway Protection Force and has played cop roles in movies, is all set to become a script writer. Madhu has played a cop in more than 50 Kannada movies in 30 years.

Madhu hails from Mandagere in Mandya. A hardcore fan of Dr Vishnuvardhan, he began his career as a theater artiste.

"I met a director for an opportunity to act in the movie directed by him. The director advised me to play a cop's role. That is how I began playing the role. I got a chance to share the screen with Dr Vishnuvardhan with Vishnu Sena. I will never forget those memorable moments. Vishnu sir advised me not to quit my job. I am still working as an RPF cop," he said. He got an opportunity to share the screen with Rebel Star Ambarish and Power Star Puneeth Rajkumar.

He said he continues with acting during the weekends and holidays. "Some of my movies are yet to arrive in theaters. As of now, I am working on a script – March 23 Night. The work is in progress," he said.

25-day landmark

Most of the Kannada movies are being withdrawn from the screens within a few days. In such a time, the film Ugrvathara has joined the list of movies that successfully screened for more than three weeks.

The team of Ugravathara gathered at Sapna Theater to celebrate the milestone. Producer Sateesh and director Gurumurthy felicitated the cast and crew of the movie.

"I attribute Priyanka madam's dedication for the success of Ugravathara. I thank her for her cooperation," the director said.

On the occasion, Priyanka Upendra said the success of Ugravathara will remain a milestone in her acting career. "Many people, including my husband Upendra, said that I cannot play a cop because of tough action scenes but I insisted on doing it. I thank the director for this opportunity. All the credit for the success of this movie has to go to all the actors and technicians,"she said. She said that fewer women-oriented movies are being made in Sandalwood. "Ugravathara is a woman-oriented movie. I am delighted about its success," she said.